

A Message from
**ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL
LISA MADIGAN**

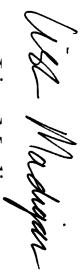


On January 2, 2007, Commonwealth Edison and Ameren started to charge significantly more for the electricity you use. This means that your monthly electric bill may increase dramatically.

As you face these rate increases, it is important to know that you are guaranteed certain protections as an Illinois consumer. This brochure provides information about your rights and ideas on how to cope with skyrocketing bills and save money on energy expenses.

I believe that affordable electric service is vital to the health, welfare, and prosperity of all Illinois families. As the lawyer for the People of the State of Illinois, I argued against these electric rate increases before the Illinois Commerce Commission, and I am continuing to challenge the rate increases in the Illinois courts.

If you think your rights have been violated, I urge you to contact my office.


Lisa Madigan
Illinois Attorney General



LISA MADIGAN
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL

If you have questions about your utility bill or your rights under the law, please call the Illinois Attorney General's Office.

CONSUMER HOTLINES

CHICAGO

1-800-386-5438

TTY: 1-800-964-3013

SPRINGFIELD

1-800-243-0618

TTY: 1-877-844-5461

CARBONDALE

1-800-243-0607

TTY: 1-877-675-9339

www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov

Worried About Your Electric Bill?



On January 2, 2007, electricity rates increased significantly for most Illinois consumers.

What if I can't pay my bill?



If you can't pay your electric bill, there are various assistance programs and loan options available to help you.

Budget and Assistance Programs

- **Budget Payment Plans** are available if your bills vary throughout the year. Electric utilities are required to offer you a budget payment plan to stabilize monthly bill payments. Under a budget payment plan, your total yearly bill is estimated and then divided into twelve equal bills.
- **The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** is a federally funded program that helps low-income households with home energy bills. To find out more about the program and to see if you qualify for LIHEAP, call 1-800-252-8643 (TTY: 1-800-785-6055) or visit www.illinoisliheap.com.

Utility-Sponsored Loan Options

CONSIDER THESE OPTIONS

CAREFULLY: The following programs

allow you to pay less now, but include interest charges, requiring that you pay more later.

- **If you think you are going to be unable to pay your bill . . .** You may be able to borrow money from the electric utility at an annual interest rate of 3.25%. Ask your utility for details.
- **If you owe the company money for past bills . . .** You can request and negotiate a deferred payment plan with the utility for the balance owed. This payment plan includes interest charges similar to those charged on credit cards, but the terms of the plan may be renegotiated later if your financial condition changes.

Know Your Rights

If you have a billing dispute, take the following steps:

1. Call your electric utility. You always have the right to speak to a supervisor.

- Commonwealth Edison
1-800-334-7661

- Ameren
Central Illinois Light: 1-888-672-5252
Central Illinois Public Service:
1-888-789-2477
Illinois Power: 1-800-755-5000

2. If your dispute is not resolved after contacting your electric utility, call the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) at 1-800-524-0795 (TTY: 1-800-858-9277).

The ICC Consumer Services Division can provide mediation assistance if you file an informal complaint. If your dispute remains unresolved, you can then file a formal complaint, which is the Commission's version of a formal lawsuit.

3. If you still have questions about your electric bill after contacting the ICC, you can call the Attorney General's office at one of the following numbers:

- CHICAGO
1-800-386-5438
TTY: 1-800-964-3013

- SPRINGFIELD
1-800-243-0618
TTY: 1-877-844-5461

- CARBONDALE
1-800-243-0607
TTY: 1-877-675-9339

How can I lower my bill?

The following simple actions can help conserve energy and lower your bills.



Check Home Appliances: Use energy saving settings on appliances and replace older appliances with newer, more energy efficient models. To find out which appliances conserve the most energy, visit www.energystar.gov. Clean or replace the filters on furnaces, air conditioners, and heat pumps.

Turn Down the Heat: If you heat your home with electricity, lower the temperature when you are not home and at night. Change the setting on your water heater to 120 degrees.

Use Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs): Use CFLs instead of incandescent light bulbs. A single CFL will provide the same amount of light, but it lasts seven times longer than a traditional light bulb and generates less heat. Replacing one 75-watt incandescent bulb with one 20-watt CFL can save up to \$75 over the life of the bulb.

Insulate, Insulate, Insulate: Check attics, windows, and doorways for cracks and drafts. Insulate your hot water heater along with any pipes and ducts in unheated areas.

For more energy saving tips, visit the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy online at www.aceee.org.